b. Naming your business

A good name is a critical component of any successful business. Start by deciding what you want your business name to communicate. What is the key element of your business? That's what your name must communicate. The name must be meaningful. People must be able to relate to the name and understand it. The name must be easy to say and yet unique. If you choose a conventional word it may be hard to express the newness or uniqueness of your idea. Instead, consider using new forms of spelling existing words.

When choosing a name keep the following do's and don'ts in mind:

* Choose a name that appeals not only to you but also to the kind of customers you are trying too attract.
* To have customers respond to your business on an emotional level, choose a comforting or familiar name - one that conjures pleasant memories.
* Don't pick a name that is long or confusing.
* Stay away from cute puns that only you understand.
* Don't use the abbreviation Inc., after your name unless your company is actually incorporated.
* Don't use the word Enterprises after your name; amateurs often use this term.

Begin by brainstorming, looking in dictionaries and magazines or talking with friends to generate ideas. Narrow your choices to four or five. To choose one name over another read each name aloud - pay attention to the way it sounds. Doodle the name into logos to see what works best. Once you've made you decision, build enthusiasm. You have completed the first step toward a strong business identity.